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The grammar of folklorization: An integrated critical discourse analysis of the linguistic depiction of Amazigh social actors in selected Moroccan EFL textbooks (1980s-present)

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1. Introduction and background

The ethnic composition in Morocco is largely made up of Arabs, the dominant social group, and Amazighs, "the majoritarian minority" (Castellino & Cavanaugh, 2013, p. 5). "*Scratch a Moroccan, find a Berber*", a telling article title by the American anthropologist David Hart (1999), compels serious attention to the Arab-Amazigh axis in Morocco, and points out to the argument that although Arabs and Amazighs have co-existed side by side in Morocco for many decades, it is quite indisputable that the Amazigh cultural component remains "the backbone" of the Moroccan nation and even the basis of the whole North African ethnic architecture (Hart, 2000).

Situated at the crossroads of Africa and Europe, Morocco has often prided itself on being the meeting point for the Arabo-Islamic, Amazigh, African, Jewish and Andalusian civilizations. Morocco's 2011 constitution has emphasized that the Moroccan cultural identity is shaped by the union of its Arab-Islamist, "Berber" and Saharan-Hassanic components, nurtured and enhanced by its African, Andalusian, Hebraic and Mediterranean influences. However, of all these components, the Amazigh cultural and ethnic component stands out as being the most problematic. Historically, the ancient people of North Africa -from Egypt's Western Desert to the Atlantic Ocean- have been referred to as "Berbers" (meaning "barbarian" in Greek but see Section 2 for a brief discussion of the appellation "Berber"). Speakers of Tamazight dialects have progressively embraced the ethnonyms Amazighs and Imazighen (the latter means free noble men) over the appellation "Berber". According to Maddy-Weitzman (1999), Amazighs' distinguishing feature continues to be the various spoken dialects of a single language: Tamazight (Libyco-Berber, an Afro-Asiatic, previously Hamito- Semitic) (Maddy-Weitzman, 1999).

Although Amazighs account for a substantial majority of the population in Morocco, "they do not hold the reins of power or equitably share in it" (Bengio & Ben-Dor, 1999). And despite the new constitutional gains that put the Amazigh culture and language on equal footings with Arabs, Amazighs, "the majoritarian minority" (Castellino & Cavanaugh, 2013, p. 5) who suffered "censure and gross violence in colonial and postcolonial times" (Merolla, 2020, p. 27), have always stood out against political, cultural, and linguistic marginalization. The socio-political demands of the Amazigh movements were initially articulated in the "Charter of Agadir" on 5 August where they openly denounced "the systematic marginalization of the Amazigh language and culture" and militated for the "integration of the Amazigh language and cultures in various areas of cultural and educational programmes" along with the "right to have access to the mass media" (Maddy-Weitzman, 2001, p. 31). In 2011, stirred by the Arab Spring demonstrations and upheavals in North African and Middle East, the political scene in Morocco opened up and the Amazigh political and civic movements soon found their voices (Said et al., 2023). The official recognition of Tamazight on constitutional grounds (alongside Arabic) has marked a turning point in Moroccan cultural policy to further strengthen its democratic credentials. Ennaji (2014) contends that despite this, Amazighs today "demand not only linguistic and cultural rights, but also economic opportunities, political rights, and dignity" (p. 93).

Historically, Morocco faced the laborious and complicated task of "nation-building" that requires the fulfilment of a unified and continuing national narrative that would articulate a distinct Moroccan national identity and accommodate the tension between ethnic plurality and political homogeneity. Appeal to the notion of *Moroccanness*, an imagined-collective national identity built on the discourse of "sameness", has been instrumental in activating the feelings of national unity and strengthening the inherent quest for cultural purity.

recontextualized social practices which, according to Van Leeuwen (2008), include in addition to social actors, social actions, space, and legitimation (official knowledge).

To understand how Moroccan EFL textbooks normalizes folklorization, the analysis draws on Van Leeuwen's (2008) social actor approach, which is a concrete application of Hallidayan transitivity system. The study has made use of a nomadic set of concepts that find their critical unity in the "tourist gaze" (Urry, 1992), "sociology of the invisible" (Blumer, 1969; Scott, 2018), "Ethnic Integration Content" (Banks, 1989, 1999), and "official knowledge" construction in school textbooks (Apple, 2000). Data were gathered from 33 EFL textbooks which have been officially produced in Morocco over the last three decades (1980s-present). Following Said (2019, 2023), the selected textbooks are assumed to be representative of three main historical periods that mark the evolution of EFL textbooks in Morocco: the Germinal Phase, the Critical Phase, and the Take-off Phase.

2. Amazighs: Finding an identity

The place and role of Amazighs in Moroccan politics has been a challenging issue that "the mere mention of the subject has long been taboo in many Arab states, because it clashed with the twin prevailing visions of the territorial state and pan-Arabism over the past half-century" (Bengio & Ben-Dor, 1999, p. vii). Specifically, the interaction between Amazigh social actors and Arabs has been characterized by *Islamization* and *Arabization*, which may overlap and reinforce one another without being necessarily mutually exclusive.

For example, Sadiqi (2009) argues that Morocco is a land of Islam and equally a land of Amazighs. This intricate fusion of Islam and "Berberness" represents one of the central characteristics of present-day Morocco (Boukous, 2012; Ennaji, 2005). While it might be argued that Islam and Amazigh ethnicity are mutually exclusive, Amazighs were historically Islamized and, therefore, followed Sunni Islam as are their non-Berber Arab compatriots in North Africa (Maddy-Weitzman, 1999, p. 29).

By the same token, the process of *Arabization* has affected Amazighs, blurring the distinction between Arabs and other ethnic groups, including Amazighs (Al-Matrafi, 2018; Hart, 1999). The Arab influence has led to excessive Arabization, complicating the definition of Berber identity. Here, Maddy-Weitzman (1999) correctly argues that "perhaps half of all North Africans have been so thoroughly Arabized over the centuries that they have lost all semblance of their Berber origins" (p. 29). According to this, Many Arab Moroccans are believed to be Arabized Berbers who adopted Arab culture and language for social mobility and/or power. This process of assimilation (Arabization and Islamization) is related to the "de-Berberization" of North Africa (McClanahan, 2006); hence, it could be reasonable to suggest that most Arab Moroccans as Arabized Berbers who might have willingly or unwillingly adopted an "Arab" culture and language for purposes of social mobility or access to power and resources.

Ennaji (2014) summarizes the axis of "Islamization", "Arabization" and "Berberness" by claiming that

> Although many Berbers adopted Islam and Arabic, the process of Arabization" that began with the Arab conquest of North Africa in the seventh century and spiraled after independence from the French in the twentieth century did not eradicate the Berber culture. Berbers in Morocco have largely maintained their pre -Islamic traditions and cultural rituals (p. 94).

3. Amazighs: Finding a name

The term(s) used for referring to the Amazigh/Berber ethnic group(s) is disputed, causing both etymological and political confusion. "Berber" has a *potentially* negative connotation derived from its historical origins. Much of this terminological confusion (Amazigh(s), Berber or Imazighen) can be attributed to the lack of clarity as to the origin of the term "Berber", which became established under the impetus of colonial ethnography of the nineteenth century. Natives who speak "Berber," favor "Imazighen", in the singular "Amazigh", which means a "free

5. Conceptual framework

5.1. Ethnic diversity and curricula

To proceed with discussing folklorization, a clear definition of "ethnicity" and "school textbooks" is required. Identity is based on the concept of "similarity", where perceived identical things are the same. For instance, Edwards (2009) defines identity as the "sameness" of an individual in all conditions, pointing out that a person is themselves and not someone else (p. 19).

Social scientists have not reached a consensus on the definition and effects of ethnicity, and that despite extensive research "nothing close to a consensus has emerged about not only what its effects are but also what it is" (Hale, 2004, p. 458). Ethnic identity is considered fluid and malleable, challenging stable and coherent definitions (Hale, 2004; Harris & Findley, 2014; Phillips, 2007; Romero, 2014). Compared to similar constructs such as race, ethnicity has gained more studious attention (Phillips, 2007, p. 16–17). In this study, ethnicity is defined as a socio-cognitive organizing principle that is socially marked (Brekhus, 1998) and politically imagined (Anderson, 1991).

Related to the above conceptualizations is the traditional link between language and identity which is inevitably an undertaking fraught with opportunities for failure (Joseph, 2004). The language-identity tie is both challenging and complex to discuss separately. Ethnic identity is often defined in relation to linguistic identity within a nation state with a central focus on language, power, and identity politics. Joseph (2004) presents a comprehensive understanding of identity as a linguistic phenomenon, intertwined with nationality, ethnicity, and religion.

This study focuses on how language contributes to the partial creation of situated identity configurations in Moroccan curricula. Norton (2010, p. 351) emphasizes the importance of analyzing language learning within social, historical, and cultural contexts, and how learners and teachers navigate diverse positions within those contexts. According to Hart (2000), the Arab-Amazigh axis is essentially a linguistic one, where Amazighs represent both the most autochthonous as well as, very recently, the most change-resistant and conservative element of the population" (p. 8).

In the context of education, school textbooks reflect political choices, educational paradigms, cultural understandings, and language strategies. Apple (1993) argues that the curriculum is not neutral but shaped by selective traditions and visions of legitimate knowledge. Therefore, the curriculum "is never simply a neutral assemblage of knowledge, somehow appearing in the texts and classrooms of a nation. It is always part of a selective tradition, someone's selection, some group's vision of legitimate knowledge" (p. 221). Textbooks offer insights into the social and political contexts of education, as they focus on specific elements of imagined culture (Bokhorst-Heng & Williams, 2016).

In the past 30 years, more information on minority representation has emerged. For example, Zhao (2014) examines national identity construction in Chinese political education textbooks, identifying two legitimation strategies that are often employed in the discursive construction of national sameness. By the same token, Mugaddam and Aljak (2013) analyze the discursive mechanisms used in constructing a unified Sudanese national identity in an EFL textbook (SPINE3). They find a biased representation favoring an Arabic and Islamic identity. Copts, an Egyptian Christian minority, are understudied in terms of representation. Abdou (2017), in a similar context, proposes an integrated framework for analyzing minority representations in history textbooks, using a textual analysis of Egyptian history textbooks from 1890 to 2017. The study reveals a consistently smaller space allocated to Coptic history compared to other eras, limiting their contributions to the nation's socio-historical narrative.

bypasses significant concepts and topics related to the discrimination and subjugation of minority groups and their symbolic fights for power and social equality. Banks (1989, 1999) highlights the model's ability to analyze the shallow inclusion of folklorization, overlooking discrimination, subjugation, and power struggles. Folklores can trivialize ethnic cultures, reinforce stereotypes, and perpetuate misconceptions (Banks, 1999, p. 18).

6. Methodology

6.1. Guiding question

This research seeks to address the following question:

- How have key elements of Amazigh folklore contributed to a specific construction of ethnicity in Moroccan EFL textbooks (1980s-present)?

6.2. Guiding approach

Analysts within the CDA paradigm are divided along "how much linguistic theory and how much social theory to integrate in an ideal analysis" (Lauritsen, 2006, p. 43). This translates into whether analysts focus on the micro or the macro politics of discourse. The reconciliation of the two perspectives holds a great promise for the present study, allowing for a flexible oscillation between linguistic and social analysis. This, it is believed, is "what makes CDA a systematic method, rather than a haphazard analysis of discourse and power" (Rogers & Rogers, 2004, p. 7).

6.3. Textbooks analyzed: Sampling design

Although there appears to be no accepted canon of data sampling procedures in CDA, data collection remains an inescapable phase and almost never completely excluded (Wodak & Meyer, 2016). Given that we could not exhaustively examine all the Moroccan EFL textbooks, a decision was made to sample the existing corpus. Sampling was guided by the concerns of balance and representativeness. The corpus came from 33 officially produced EFL textbooks which have been developed, approved and distributed by the Moroccan Ministry of Education, which oversees all operations related to the production and circulation of teaching and learning materials in all Moroccan public and private schools and institutions, and have been required to be used in every school, public or private (This included ancillaries such as teachers' books and workbooks. Appendix 1). More importantly, the selected textbooks were distributed over three periods that match the historical development of EFL textbooks in Morocco: The Germinal Phase, the Critical Phase and the Take-off Phase (Said, 2019). The periodization scheme proposed in Said (2019) is briefly sketched below:

(a) **The Germinal Phase** [from early 1980s to the late 1990s]. This represents the incipient phase that gave rise to the first "genuine" Moroccan EFL textbooks designed by Moroccan textbook committees.

(b) **The Critical Phase** [the mid-1990s- mid-2000]. This was a critical-transitory period because it did not last for a long time and also because it was set at the crossroads of internationalization and localization.

(c) **The Take-off Phase** [from mid-2000 up to now]. This phase witnesses new, transparent, and more diverse structures in the designing of EFL textbooks.

Additionally, the examined textbooks come from and cover all grade levels (from 9th grade to 2nd year baccalaureate level) (Appendix 1).

The methodological choices outlined above aim to balance non-probability and probability sampling (Kothari, 2004). I employed a mixed sampling design, combining probability and non-probability sampling, with a focus on stratified sampling. Stratified sampling identifies distinct subpopulations (strata) within the population, enhancing organization and homogeneity. This

involving two participants: an "Actor", and a "Goal". Mental processes construe "sensing", or "consciousness". Relational processes encode processes of "being", "having" or "being at". Behavioral processes construe physiological behaviors such as smiling or breathing. Behavioral processes are, however, often caught between material and mental processes because the physical and mental aspects of processes are inseparable. In this context, Halliday (1985) notes that "the behaviour is typically a conscious being, like the Senser, but the process functions more like one of 'doing'" (p. 128). Verbal processes are processes of "saying"; they represent "symbolizations involving a symbol source, the Sayer" (Matthiessen et al., 2010, p. 238). Existential processes constitute the last type in the system of transitivity processes. These processes entail that something exists, happens, or occurs.

The last step in the analysis consisted of two complementary moves. First, tables of frequencies and percentages summarizing folklore narratives of Amazigh (and Arabs) were generated. After computing frequencies and proportions, a series of Chi-square tests of significance was employed, when needed, to examine the significant differences between either Amazigh and Arab social groups or in terms of each analytical category.

Second, to assess the findings from multiple vantage perspectives, the results of the tables of frequencies and percentages were brought under the critical radar of the theoretical apparatus developed in the theoretical part, such as "the sociology of the invisible", "official knowledge", "ethnic content integration", "commodification", and "ethnic tourism".

7. Findings and discussion

School textbooks bear visible, and more than often imperceptible, traces of what Williams (2014) calls the "social effect of schooling" which describes "how things were, what happened, and how they came to be the way they are now" (p. 1). This means that in the process of the selective representation, ethnic groups and their cultures are seriously underrepresented, marginalized (Chu, 2015), and/or left unimagined in the official state narrative (Anderson, 1991). Critiquing the ideology of the Moroccan EFL textbook narratives by investigating how Amazighs, through the discourse of folklorisation, have been imagined, taught and learned, or ignored, are major issues that this study aims at researching. While the overall aim is to evaluate the state's official response to cultural and ethnic diversity to promote equity and national unity, the specific aim is to deconstruct and make visible the mechanisms through which Moroccan ELF textbooks might become the ideological state apparatuses.

To examine the discourse of folklorisation, the proposed analysis focuses on festivals as recontextualised social practices which include in addition to social actors, actions, time, space, and legitimation. Folklorization rests (among other things) on festivals, music, cultural artefacts, systems of knowledge and space. I analyzed these facets of folklorization separately, examining the chains of contextualization for each component in terms of social actors (participants), social actions (processes), and legitimation (knowledge).

7.1. Festivals

A total of 13 instances of festivals were identified. Table 1 shows the occurrence of these festivals according to whether they have been identified as exclusively Amazigh or left unmarked and therefore belong to the all-inclusive component: *Moroccan(s)*. Amazigh festivals have been

Table 1. The occurrences of festivals in Moroccan EFL textbooks

	Amazigh (Exclusive)	**Moroccan (Inclusive)**	**Chi-Square**	**p-value**
Festivals (*N*= 13)	8 **61.53 %**	5 **38.46%**	.692	.405
Inter-rater reliability	α= 0.96			

Table 3. Results of role allocation for female social actors

	Activated	passivated	χ^2	Asymp. Sig	Inter-rater reliability
Females	23 63.88%	13 36.11%	2.778	.096	α= 0.83
Total	*N*= 36/100%				

- **Example 3**: Henna, a reddish-brown organic dye; is applied to the bride's hands and feet before the wedding to ward off evil eye. (Ticket 1, p. 110)

Evidence in Table 3 shows that Amazigh females have been activated more significantly than being passivated, which leads to the assumption that Amazigh women have been assigned active roles. Chi-square reveals that the difference is significant.

However, being activated cannot qualify as an indicator of power, equal or fair representation. To further investigate the functional properties of the activities wherein Amazigh women have been activated, Halliday and Matthiessen (2004)'s transitivity model has been used. Table 4 shows that Amazigh women have been mostly activated in relation to behavioral and relational processes more significantly than other processes.

Two important properties render the analysis of behavioral processes relevant here. First, behavioral processes are non-transactive, requiring only one participant. When the actions and reactions of Amazigh females are behavioralized, they are represented as ordinary actions, without substance, intention or impact, and are ultimately depicted in socially low status. Van Leeuwen (2008) explains that "the ability to 'transact' requires a certain power, and the greater that power, the greater the range of 'goals' that may be affected by an actor's actions" (p. 62).

Second, excessive representation of social actors in terms of behavioral processes casts females in the realm of the "physical" and the "sensual" and, hence, deprives them of being represented as "thinkers" and "sayers" in mental and verbal processes. The emphasis falls on emotional outcomes, cravings, desires, and wishes. Again, as Van Leeuwen (2008) observes "the greater the power of social actors, the more likely it is that cognitive, rather than affective, reactions will be attributed to them" (p. 58). The examined textbooks often display aquatic sceneries, in whose proximity Amazigh women stand reminiscent of the heartrending *Issli* and *Tsslit* folktale. This picturesque depiction, however, never goes anywhere near exposing nudity or what would certainly be considered indecency in a conservative society such as Morocco.

7.1.2. Knowledge construction

As was indicated in Table 1, festivals in Morocco are either exclusively Amazigh or inclusively Moroccan (Arab). However, there are several interesting contrasts which can be discussed using the sociology of the invisible and the categories of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). The sociological lenses predict that the exclusively Amazigh festivals have been discursively marked and therefore straightforwardly identified; the second type of festivals, however, has been left unidentified, and thus discursively invisible. These two types of festivals seem to articulate two perspectives of knowledge construction, with the first being embedded in the mythical, and

Table 4. Results of processes featuring Amazigh women

Processes	Material	Mental	Verbal	Relational	Behavioral	α
Females *N*=33	7 **21.21%**	1 **3.03%**	2 **6.06%**	4 **12.12%**	19 **57.57%**	0.73 —-

- **Example (6)**: Most people call it Andalusian Music. AL ALA means the instrument. The word is used to differentiate it from the old religious vocal chant where the use of an instrument was banned. This type of music was born of the fusion of Arab and Andalusian Culture, a fusion which took over eight centuries … Andalusian Music is savant and subtle. It used to be within the reach of only a small intellectual elite … (Quick Way, 2, p. 31).
- **Example (7)**: MEET THE MASTER MIND-BEHIND ANDALUSIAN MUSIC. When he died in 857, Ziryab- the nightingale- was already recognised as the most remarkable musician who had ever lived. We owe Andalusian music to Ziryab: we also owe to him some of the finest songs ever sung- *Al Muwashahat*. (EIL3, p. 137).

First, the mode of representing Amazigh music is predominantly visual compared to the multimodal representation of Andalusian music. The choice of one mode over the other is critically significant, with the pictorial constructing a direct appeal to the eye, to the material, to the concrete and, above all, to the physical; and with the linguistic, signifying the cognitive, the abstract and the "intellectual". The representation of Andalusian music seems to assume both roles. Second, the (Arabo) Andalusian music has been reserved for the *elite*. In (6), we read the Andalusian Music is both *savant* and *subtle*, weaving an implicit allusion to other types of music thought to be "subtle" and "savant", say, the opera which combines entertainment and "high knowledge" in the production of art. The examples also maintain that Andalusian music has been reserved for the intellectuals, and thus, lending further "halo" to it. Example (7) underlines the *master* mind behind the Andalusian music as a *nightingale* and the *most remarkable musician who had ever lived*. On the other hand, Amazigh music, say *Ahwach*, is represented as an outdoor type of music, set against natural backgrounds (often mountains), with female and male singers and dancers. The representation often foregrounds female dancers and singers both in quality and in number. Linguistically, the discourse seems to be taciturn when it comes to articulating the socio-intellectual history of Amazigh's songs, presenting them as objects, or "moments" for entertainment.

7.3. Handicrafts: From pride to profit

The analyzed textbooks from the three phases asserted a strong link between Amazigh identity and traditional carpet weaving. The centrality of these symbolic processes in the representation of Amazighs, especially women, conjures up *orientalistic*, almost De La Croix style depictions, where color and exoticism reigns supreme as to distract from essence. In this respect, Becker (2006), succinctly summarized the scene, giving women the role of an artist:

> Berber women are artists. They weave brightly coloured carpets… They embroider brightly coloured motifs on their indigo head coverings and on special occasions wear elaborate silver and amber jewellery (Figure 1). Women both create and wear the artistic symbols of Berber identity, making the decorated female body itself a symbol of that identity (p. 42).

The qualitative analysis has detected a discursive shift from pride to profit, from symbolic goods, traditionally meant for everyday use, to commodities, strengthened by the hegemony of the tourist gaze, which indexes an orientation towards the rationality of the new economy (Dlaske, 2014). Textiles, for instance, stand significantly in Amazigh culture where Amazigh women are recognized for their vibrantly traditional carpets, coverings, and clothes. However, traditional Amazigh textiles started to lose part of their primary function and become more and more valued for their market worth, marking a shift from identity to commodity. Modern Moroccan EFL textbooks (Take-off Phase) seem to embody this shift from the trope of pride to that of profit. Example (8) evokes associations to *nativeness* and up-to-datedness, giving carpets a global outlook, and treating them as sources of economic gain, as part of the tourist industry.

- **Example (8):**

DIALOGUE TWO

Mrs. Baker opens the catalogue. Aicha sits down next to her

MRS. BAKER: They're fantastic! Look at this one.

7.4.1. Romanticized space

When it comes to the discursive construction of space, tribalism and rurality seem to accompany the representation of Amazighs under both folklorized and non- folklorized discourses. First, the excessive ideological construction of Amazighs as essentially rural leads to their portrayal as "virtuous children of nature" (Anderson, 2007, as cited in Slimi, 2009, p. 86), who are continuously set in a 'background of a natural landscape containing hills, plants and grass. This stereotypical depiction not only tokenizes them but removes the complexities of the daily lives, depicting them as "unspoiled ethnic Other" (Varutti, 2014, p. 183).

Second, being essentially rural, a sense of "*nostalgia*" might be built in the way Amazighs are portrayed as "reservoirs of still-extant authenticity" (Schein, 1994, p. 72, as cited in Zhao & Postiglione, 2010), or a counterweight to modernity. Amazighs are portrayed as leading a "traditional" life in a setting that is on the brink of nature, contributing more authenticity and exoticism to the representation. In a similar context, Slimi (2009) points out that rural depiction of ethnic groups helps draw a clear line between them and "mainstream" society, setting them apart "from the urban metropolises, from realms of education, employment and other activities of 'civility'" (p. 87).

Third, it seems that the discourse not only depicts Amazigh social actors as "virtuous children of nature", but also specifies the types of activities which are supposed to strengthen this representation. The most common occupation associated with Amazighs in this discourse is that of animal husbandry, depicting them as shepherded both linguistically and visually. This romanticized portrayal of space obscures the very hard reality of those inhabiting it. The same beautiful Atlas Mountains are likely to hide a plethora of socioeconomic problems such as access to health care, education, and transport infrastructure. Agyeman (1989 as cited in Bryant & Pini, 2011, p. 41) explains that 'the countryside is seen in static terms; a repository of the best of what is (was) English in that it is good, pure, and untouched. However, obscured and marginalized within this representation of rurality is "the racialized Other".

7.4.2. Commodified space

Once romanticized, Amazigh spatial arrangements can also be commodified, reduced to commodities for tourists to gaze upon. Otherwise stated, space loses its bearing and becomes fragmented; loses its meaning and becomes functional, and finally, loses its identity markers and becomes available for all and to all, giving rise to the tourist gaze, which catalogues, seals, generalizes space and its inhabitants, and increases its value in the tourist market. This makes space the subject to rational economic calculations.

The moral overtones of this economic shift permeated narratives like entertainment, tourism, and cultural diversity. However, as Zhao and Postiglione (2010) explain, the commodification of space 'constructs an image of ethnic minorities as "Others" based on unique ethnic features, such as history, customs, religion, and residence in areas popular with tourists (p. 325). Similarly, excessive commodification of space eclipses the various social problems left unsaid behind the beautiful landscape such as poverty, illiteracy, housing, water shortage, electricity, health care, etc. Commodification appears to mitigate and at times even beautify these problems.

Before we proceed any further, a note on the periodization scheme proposed by Said (2019, 2023) should be briefly highlighted. Said's periodization scheme includes the Germinal Phase (early 1980s to mid-1995), Critical Phase (mid-1990s to mid-2000), and Take-off Phase (mid-2000 to present). However, the preliminary analysis reveals that the boundaries between these phases are not clear-cut as folklorization of Amazighs persists throughout. One textbook, *Al Massar* (originally designed for Common Core student), stands out as an exception, representing Amazighs as active agents challenging mainstream stereotypes. This supports Said's model but warrants further investigation on a larger scale.

Another critical insight comes from Van Dijk's (1999) social cognitive framework to the analysis of racism, where we can link folklorization to the creation and dissemination of an overall social mental model for representing, and ultimately categorizing, Amazighs. The over-occurrence of Imilchil marriage festival, for instance, forms a unique social mental model which, in addition to events, includes an evaluation of that event. Subsequent generations of Moroccan EFL textbooks keep recalling the same festival, with each time updating old models, or building new ones and authorizing selective aspects of Amazighs' socio-cultural identity. Van Dijk's (1999) argument can also be translated to the observation that determining the significance of ethnic content, textbook designers, teachers and students, make reference to mental categories such as "frames", "schemata", and "general propositions", subsumed under "stereotypes." These unconscious mental categories serve as "pigeon-hole into which events and individuals can be sorted, thereby making such events and individuals comprehensible" (Fowler, 1991, p. 17).

9. Conclusion

Official school textbooks constitute what Apple (2000) calls the state's "official knowledge". This study is a response to scholarly calls to critically explore the ways such an "official knowledge" is linguistically recontextualized, construed, represented and ultimately legitimized (or delegitimized). Zooming on Amazighs, a majoritarian minority in Morocco, the study develops a nomadic perspective that examines how the discourse of folklorization contributes to the creation of a closed set of linguistic options for the representation of Amazigh social actors.

Taking inspiration from CDA, the current study has shown that the folklorization of Amazighs equates with the dissemination of socio-political awareness into aesthetic and pedagogical texts which serve myriad of "interests", so often legitimized under entertainment, discovery and multicultural teaching, with EFL textbooks not only creating a specific profile for Amazighs but also defining it, legitimizing it, reducing it, decontextualizing it, and above all, maintaining it in pedagogical texts and visuals.

The study argued that the content of Moroccan EFL textbooks is not an arbitrary assemblage of "facts" about Amazighs but a highly constructed congregation of beliefs, theories, and propositions. Folklore is not only *manifest*, and thus reported on in texts, but it is rather *made*, filtered, restricted, and then reported on to satisfy explicit and implicit ends. The folklorization of Amazigh social groups, permanently encapsulated in ethnic festivals, takes a mythological form at best and a superstitious interpretation at worst. These mythological forms of festivals seem to cast Amazighs into an irrational, unreal and static world. It is in this way that folklorized representations, Crawford and Hoffman (2018) argue, suggest that change in Amazigh-speaking communities is likely to present a threat to the perpetuation of Amazigh cultural heritage.

Undoubtedly, further research on a larger scale is essential to examine, firstly, whether other studies that have been published in the French/Arabic language are available. The present study has mainly relied on existing studies in English. Possible studies in French or Arabic are likely to strengthen or challenge some of the arguments advanced in this study. Second, due to practical constraints, the current study runs short of providing a comprehensive analysis to other textbooks (other than the EFL ones); this could be addressed by future researchers.

Finally, it should be noted, following Said et al. (2023, p. 8) that,

> it is none of our intentions to claim that folklore is necessarily untrue or old fashioned, nor to demonize Moroccan EFL textbooks, or to imply that Amazigh folklore is "primitive", "simple", or "fake", with no artistic, creative, or expressive dimensions (Sims & Stephens, 2011). Instead, we seek to criticize the institutionalized production of knowledge about Amazighs and how Moroccan EFL textbooks have contributed to the creation and maintenance of a closed system of multimodal options for the configuration and reconfiguration of Amazighs, defining and redefining canons of taste and value.

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Appendix 1: Analyzed textbooks used in this study

		Textbooks	Level	Year	House and place of publication
THE GERMINAL PHASE	*Students' Books*	*Steps to English*	1st year	1981	Libraire Al Maarif: Rabat
		Further Steps in English	2nd year	1996	SODEN: Mohammedia
		English in Life	1st year	1992	Nejah Eljadida: Casablanca
		English in Life	2nd year	1993	Nejah Eljadida: Casablanca
		English in Life	3rd year	1993	Nejah Eljadida: Casablanca
	Ancillaries	*Further Steps in English*	Teacher's Book	1988	Nejah Eljadida: Casablanca
		English in Life 1st year	Teacher's Book	1992	Nejah Eljadida: Casablanca
		English in Life 2nd year	Teacher's Book	1993	Nejah Eljadida: Casablanca
		English in Life 2nd year	Workbook	1995	El Maarif Eljadida: Casablanca
		Textbooks	**Level**	**Year**	**House and Place of Publication**
THE CRITICAL PHASE	*Students' books*	*Quick Way 1*	1st Year	2003	Beni Snassen: Salé
		Quick Way 2	2nd Year	2003	Beni Snassen: Salé
		Quick Way 3	3rd Year	2005	Librairie Alouma: Casablanca
		Focus	9th Grade	2004	Nadia Edition : Casablanca
		English Horizons	9th Grade	2005	Scochpress, Casablanca
	Ancillaries	*My Way*	*Activity Book*	2004	Librairie Alouma: Casablanca
		Highway 3	*Workbook*	2002	Beni Snassen: Salé
		Quick Way1	*Teacher's book*	2003	Beni Snassen: Salé
		English Horizons	*workbook*	2012	Scochpress, Macmillan
		Focus	*Workbook*	2013	Nadia Edition : Casablanca

(*Continued*)